

REMARKS

Claims 1-32 are pending in the present application. After entry of the above amendments, claims 1-32 will be still pending in this application. Applicants believe that the present application is in condition for allowance, which prompt and favorable action is respectfully requested.

The Examiner rejected Claims 1-32 as being allegedly anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,717,830 issued to Sigler et al. (Sigler). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Applicants respectfully submit that Sigler does not disclose the claimed invention. Specifically, Sigler does not disclose sending a message to a net participant asking the participant whether the participant wishes to remain participating in the net. On the contrary, Sigler does not send any message asking the user whether the user wishes to stay in the net or not. Therefore, since Sigler does not disclose all limitations of the claimed invention, Sigler cannot anticipate the claimed invention.

Furthermore, Sigler does not disclose keeping the participant in the net if the participant wishes to stay, even if the participant had been inactive or had released the push-to-talk button for any time period. This is in sharp contrast with the Sigler's teaching that a user who had been inactive for more than a given time period or had released the push-to-talk is removed, without giving the user any chance of indicating his or her wish to remain in the net.

Therefore, since Sigler does not disclose all limitations of the claimed invention, Sigler cannot anticipate the claimed invention. Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to withdraw this rejection.

CONCLUSION

In light of the amendments contained herein, Applicants submit that the application is in condition for allowance, for which early action is requested.

Please charge any fees or overpayments that may be due with this response to Deposit Account No. 17-0026.

Respectfully submitted,

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By: Abdollah Katbab
Abdollah Katbab, Reg. No. 45,325
(858) 651-4132

QUALCOMM Incorporated
Attn: Patent Department
5775 Morehouse Drive
San Diego, California 92121-1714
Telephone: (858) 658-5787
Facsimile: (858) 658-2502